

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY PLEASED WITH NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REPORT NOT TO BUILD
ROAD**

Apparent Decision To Compensate Swain County Will Protect Fragile Wilderness Area

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley issued the following statement today in response to the National Park Service’s update on the status of the North Shore Road Environmental Impact Statement:

“I am pleased the National Park Service is listening to North Carolinians who want to make sure our fragile and precious wilderness areas are protected. I hope this latest finding by the Park Service helps bring this 67-year-old matter, finally, to a close and assures that this sensitive area on the north shore of the Fontana Reservoir is protected.

“More than a year ago I wrote to the Secretary of the Interior asking that this area of remarkable beauty in one of our nation's most beloved and visited national parks be protected to preserve the pristine water quality and unique aquatic habitats of the streams in the area. Any construction activity in the area will threaten the delicate balance of streams, woodland and wetlands.

“Estimates run as much as \$600 million for an unnecessary road. It would be an outrage to spend that kind of money when the Great Smoky National Park itself faced a \$11.5 million operating shortfall last year.

“The Park Service should move expeditiously toward the financial settlement with Swain County and bring this matter to a close.”

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NOTE: *The National Park Service news release is attached.*